

REMARKS

This is a response to Office Action dated May 24, 2004. Claims 1-5, 7-17, 43-45, 47-49, 50-61 and 63-64 are pending in the application. Claim 50 has been amended. Reconsideration of this application in view of the above claim amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

First, the Office Action indicated that claims 1-5, 7-17, 43-45 and 47-49 are allowed and claims 57-58 are allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowance.

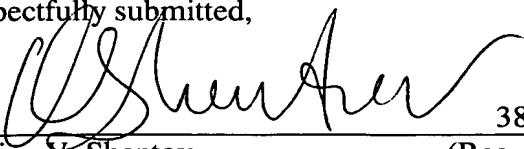
Second, the Office Action rejected claims 50-56, 59-61 and 63-64 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,703,276 to Beer in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,931,760 to Yamaguchi et al. and U.S. Patent No. 4,727,327 to Toyoshima et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse. In particular, amended claim 50 recites that "all magnets being disposed so that their magnetization directions have substantially the same orientation." Applicants respectfully submit that contrary to the assertion of the Office Action the prior art of record does not disclose such a limitation. In particular, the cited references disclose magnetic configurations in which only diagonally opposite magnets have the same magnetization direction, which is evidenced, for example, by corresponding Figures 1 in Beer and Yamaguchi, and Fig. 4 in Toyashima; however, as seen from these figures, the adjacent magnets do not have the same magnetization direction. This is an important design difference, which is not obvious and not disclosed in the cited references. Accordingly, applicants submit that claim 50, as well as claims dependent thereon, are patentable.

On the basis of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance. A prompt action by the Examiner to this effect is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments concerning this submission, or any aspect of the application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the phone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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